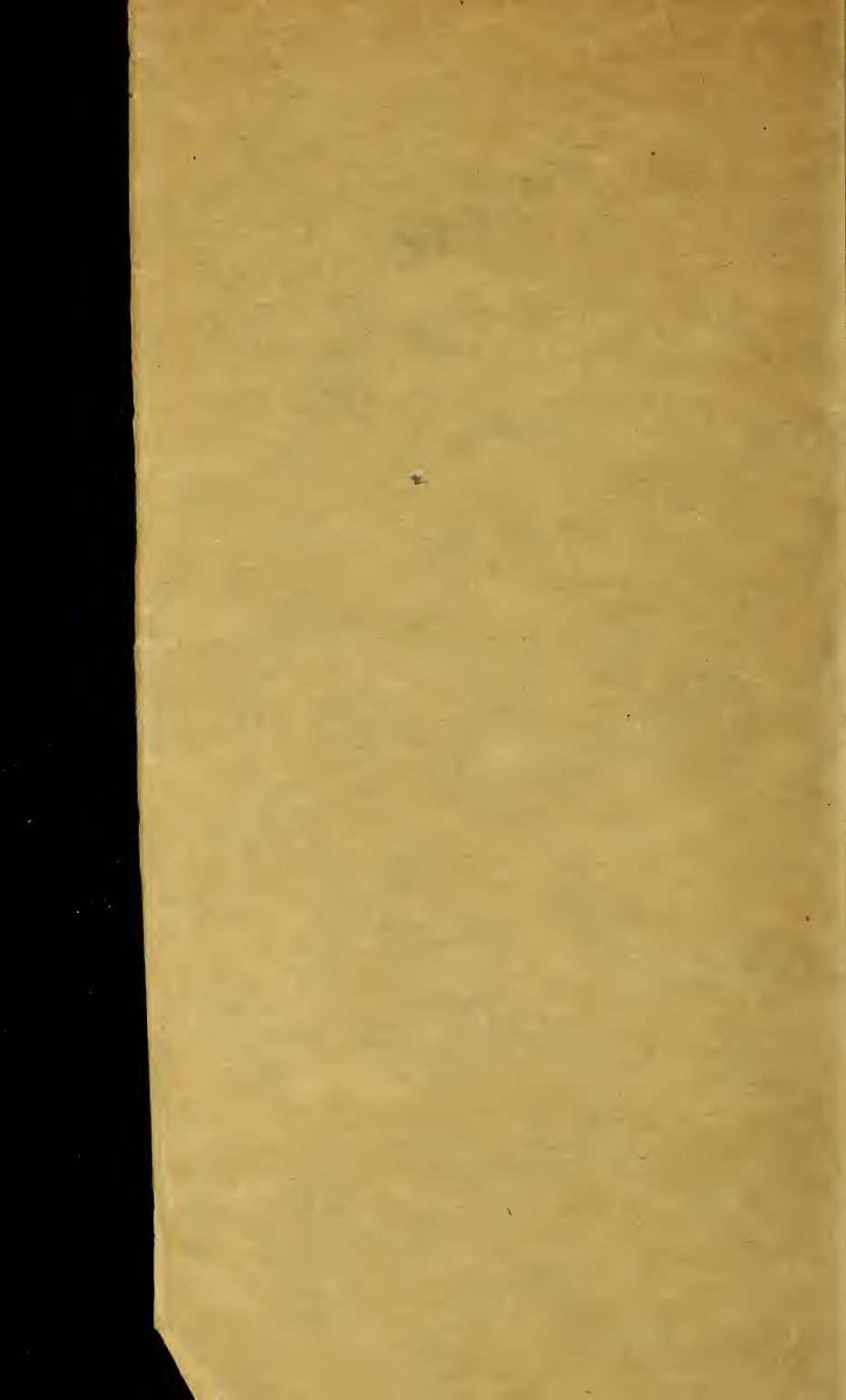


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the language just as I found it, independent of any fixed principles, neither noting nor recognising any resemblances; and trusting that this paper will at least illustrate the difficulties in the way of conforming these fundamentally different dialects to the exact rules of any modern language, I offer it to the consideration of those interested in the languages of the American aborigines.

On the ANDAMAN ISLANDS, and their INHABITANTS.

By E. H. MAN, Esq., F.R.G.S., &c.

(Read on May 13, 1884.)

IN considering the habits, customs, and physical peculiarities of a savage race, it is important to acquire as much information as possible regarding the land they inhabit, and also to ascertain the nature and extent of the influences exercised by, or resulting from, their intercourse with other nationalities. It is therefore my purpose to present the reader with a brief sketch, by way of supplement to my previous papers on the Aboriginal Inhabitants of the Andamans, which appeared in the "Journal of the Anthropological Institute" for 1882-3, giving a few of the many points of interest connected with the Andamans, and referring to the writings of Messrs. Ball, Hume, Kurz, and other specialists for information regarding the geology, ornithology, &c., of the islands, which subjects are deemed to lie somewhat outside the scope of this Journal.

The Andaman Islands, which till within the last hundred years were almost *terra incognita*, are situated in the Bay of Bengal, between the 10th and 14th parallels of N. lat. and near the meridian 93 E. of Greenwich; they comprise what are known as the Great and the Little Andamans, and, together with the Coco and Preparis Islands to the north, and the Nicobar Islands which lie to the south, form a volcanic chain extending between the province of Pegu and the northernmost point of Sumatra.

Great Andaman¹ is about 140 miles long, and includes not only the three main islands known as North, Middle, and South Andaman, but also the Archipelago, Interview, Rutland, and various lesser islets adjacent to its sea-board. At a con-

¹ For the probable derivation of the name "Andaman," the reader is referred to "Journ Anthropol. Inst.," vol. xii, No. 40, p. 70.

siderable distance eastward of Great Andaman, but connected with the group, are two small uninhabited islands known as Narcondam and Barren Island, both of which contain volcanoes, though the latter only is active at the present day. To the south, and about midway between Great Andaman and the northernmost point of the Nicobar group, lies Little Andaman, consisting of a single island about 27 miles in length, and varying in breadth from 10 to 16 miles; there are also a few small islets near its coast.

None of the islands exceed 20 miles in breadth, and the area of the entire group is estimated at about 2,508 square miles, four-fifths of which are comprised in Great Andaman.

Nearly all the high land occurs in the vicinity of the east coast, shelving gradually towards the west, where few, and those but minor, elevations are to be found. The principal hills are: Saddle Peak¹ (2,400 feet) in North Andaman, overlooking Port Cornwallis; Ford's Peak (1,400 feet) on Rutland Island; and Mount Harriet (1,100 feet) in South Andaman, commanding the harbour of Port Blair.

The climate of the Andamans much resembles that of Lower Burmah, and the temperature throughout the year is very uniform; the variation in the shade during the dry season is about 22°, and averages 17° during the remainder of the year; the extreme variation throughout the twelve months may be estimated at 26°, viz., between 70° and 96°. The cool season sets in during the last weeks of December and early part of January, and the hot season lasts through the months of March and April. The S.W. monsoon commences in the latter part of April or early in May, and usually terminates about the end of October, but on the change in the direction of the wind to N.E. heavy showers frequently occur for several weeks, and even, though at rare intervals, in January and February. The average number of wet days in the year is 182, and the rainfall 116 inches; the dry season is usually characterised during the first two months by strong winds from N.E., which cause sickness and prove equally prejudicial to vegetation. Although it has been ascertained that many of the most severe cyclones which have occurred in the Bay of Bengal during the past twenty-five years have had their origin in the immediate vicinity of the Andamans, only one is recorded (viz., in 1864) as having visited the islands themselves; in the same period there have been a few earthquakes, the first of which mention is made took place in August, 1868, and the next in February, 1880, from which time several slight shocks were felt until, in December (31st), 1881, another severe earthquake visited the group, the effects of which were

¹ The only ascent on record of Saddle Peak was made in February, 1882, by Major M. Protheroe, C.S.I., and other officers of Port Blair.

experienced on both the Indian and Burman coasts; another, though slighter, shock was felt on February 27th, 1882.¹

Among the many noteworthy features of these islands are the numerous harbours in which, especially on the east coast, safe anchorage can be obtained at all seasons of the year; the most important and best known of these harbours are: Port Blair in South Andaman, and Port Cornwallis² in North Andaman; of both it has been said they may be classed among the finest harbours of the world, affording ample accommodation as well as shelter to even "half the British navy," in addition to which, from their central position in the Bay of Bengal, they present great advantages to vessels in need of refitting, and also as ports of refuge.

The water³ in the harbour of Port Blair has been found to be remarkable for its high density, as is evidenced by the rapid oxidation of iron immersed in it; its extreme clearness has also attracted the notice of many, who have viewed through its pellucid depths the wonderful coral beds which abound in certain parts of the coast. The marvellous variety of the colouring to be found among these corals must be seen to be appreciated, but some idea of their wondrous beauty may be formed from the following extract:—"As we steamed along, visions of the splendours of the submarine world broke upon our view; . . . I feel quite unable to attempt the task of describing, much less conveying an adequate idea of the exquisite assortment of colour, of the varied forms of life which were included in every square yard of these tropical coral reefs. The most gorgeous combination of vegetable and animal life afford but a poor sub-aërial representation of these submarine gardens."⁴ But to return.

¹ On the occasion of the disastrous earthquake in the Straits of Sunda (August 26th, 1883), a report as of a distant signal gun was heard at Port Blair at about 9 P.M. of that day, followed by several similar reports at irregular intervals during the next two days. It was thought at the time that a vessel was wrecked off the coast, and the station steamer was sent out to render assistance; at 7 A.M. on Monday (27th) the sea rose and receded thrice in the course of a few minutes.

² This was the harbour selected in 1824 as the rendezvous of the fleet conveying the expedition under Sir Archibald Campbell to Rangoon during the first Burmese war.

³ The supply of water from the tanks and wells in the Settlement is pronounced on medical authority to be both good and plentiful, and no diseases have ever yet been traced to the use of these waters.

⁴ *Vide* "Jungle Life in India," pp. 359-360, by V. Ball, Esq., F.R.S. The vivid description by the same writer of a coral reef at the Nicobars (*vide* p. 202) is so applicable also to those at the Andamans, that I feel the reader will thank me for appending it in this place:—"There are corals which in their living state are of many shades of fawn, buff, pink, and blue, while some are tipped with a majenta-like bloom. Sponges which looked as hard as stone, spread over wide areas, while sprays of coralline added their graceful forms to the picture. Through the vistas so formed, golden-banded and metallic-blue fish meandered, while on the patches of sand here and there the *holothurians* and various mollusca and crustaceans might be seen slowly crawling."

The other harbours which may be mentioned are: Stewart's Sound, Port Campbell, Port Mouat, Kyd Island Bay, Port Andaman, and the Bay between South Andaman and Rutland Island. There are besides many good anchorages, and several navigable channels have been discovered by successive commanders of the Settlement steamer, but in the absence of any other guide than Blair's old chart, which as relating to a coral-bound coast must require considerable revision at the present day, and with the knowledge that the extent of the shoals and reefs¹ is only approximately indicated in many parts, those unacquainted with the coast find it necessary to take a circuitous route and to exercise great care in proceeding from one point to another, especially on the northern and western shores, where the coral banks and reefs are known to extend as far as twenty miles seaward. Several creeks on the three main islands of Great Andaman are of a sufficient size to allow of the passage of boats for a considerable distance into the interior, and though of course these are of no little importance in opening up a country like the Andamans, they are chiefly valuable as affording a natural channel for the conveyance of produce from the extensive tracts of rich land² in their immediate vicinity, in lieu of the costly and indifferent land carriage which in the absence of such water-way would have to be substituted.³

The natural beauty of the scenery of the Andamans never fails to awaken the admiration of every visitor, and has been deservedly eulogised by various writers, one of whom (Prof. Ball) says: "Of all the places I have seen in Europe, Killarney can alone convey an idea of these scenes. The blue waters, the luxuriant emerald green vegetation down to the margin of the coast, and the passing showers which brighten all the aspects of nature, have their counterpart here."⁴

Various theories have been advanced with regard to the origin and affinity of the aboriginal population of the Andamans, but no certain information is obtainable in the matter. The statements of the early Arabian travellers, and also of Marco Polo, give grounds for believing that the Andamans were inhabited

¹ These are formed chiefly of *Caryophyllia*, *Madrepora*, *Porites*, *Meandrina*, and other reef-forming corals (Kurz).

² By means of a comparatively light embankment, these lands are capable of cultivation to the very borders of the creek.

³ Probably ignorance, and not disregard of these and other considerations which might be adduced, has led to the suggestion by some visitors (including two able officers of long standing) that the bunding of the deep mouths of such creeks would prove highly advantageous by adding largely to the area of land suitable for paddy cultivation; had, however, their observations been made during the rains instead of during the dry months, their opinions would doubtless have been considerably modified.

⁴ Vide "Jungle Life in India," by V. Ball, Esq., F.R.S., p. 362 (1880).

centuries ago by the progenitors of the present race, and afford (apart from the knowledge that the interior of the Malayan Peninsula, as well as of the Philippine Islands, has been from very distant times occupied by Negritos closely resembling if not also closely allied to the Andamanese) strong *prima facie* evidence against the somewhat plausible tale which found credence at one time—*i.e.*, that these islands were originally peopled by a cargo of African slaves saved from the wreck of a Portuguese ship. It is surprising that this hypothesis, which has long since been disproved, should have ever been entertained, for, as Professor Owen has observed, “it is to be presumed that the Portuguese would import from the Guinea coast, or other mart of Negro slaves, individuals of the usual stature, and it is incredible that their descendants, enjoying freedom in a tropical region affording such a sufficiency and even abundance of food as the Andamans are testified to supply, should have degenerated in the course of two or three centuries to the characteristic dwarfishness of the otherwise well made, strong, and active natives¹ of the Andaman Islands.”²

The persistence with which travellers and writers, from the earliest times³ to a comparatively recent date,⁴ have maintained that these aborigines are anthropophagi would be remarkable were it not a common experience that idle tales, especially when of a prejudicial character, have always been readily accepted,

¹ The following remarks, which appeared in a report of a lecture delivered by Professor W. H. Flower, F.R.S., will be read with interest in this connection:—“It is very possible—but this is purely hypothetical—that the Andamanese, whose geographical position is almost midway between either extremes of the range of the woolly-haired races, may be the unchanged or little modified representatives of a primitive type from whom the African negroes on the one hand, and the Oceanic negroes on the other, have taken their origin, and hence everything connected with their history or structure becomes of the greatest interest to anthropologists” (*vide Brit. Med. Journ.*, May 3, 1879).

² Prior to 1879 the theories which had been advanced to account for the colonisation of the Andamans by their present peculiar inhabitants were summed up by Dr. Dobson, F.R.S., as follows:—

The present inhabitants of the Andamans are—

- I. The descendants of shipwrecked negroes escaped either from some Arab slave-ship carried out of its course by adverse winds, or from a slave-ship wrecked on the Andamans on its way to the Portuguese Settlement in Pegu (Symes’ “Embassy to Ava,” *Calcutta Monthly Register*, 1790).
- II. Aborigines not connected on any anatomical grounds with the people of any existing continent (Owen).
- III. Negritos—negroes (Huxley).
- IV. Negritos or Semangs from the Malaya Peninsula (Wallace).
- V. Mincopie branch of the Negrito division of an original negro stock (Quatrefages).

³ *Vide* Colonel Yule’s “Marco Polo,” vol. ii, p. 251.

⁴ *Vide* Mouat, p. 71, and W. W. Hunter, who writes: “During the next half century (*i.e.*, from 1796) the Andamans appear in the records only as a cluster of cannibal islands” (*vide Imperial Gazetteer of India*).

whether they relate to individuals or to races; the origin of the belief in this instance may possibly be traceable to the inveterate hostility which they have manifested towards all strangers approaching their shores, but for which abundant excuse can be found in the accounts given by Capt. Miller¹ of the malpractices of the Malay and Chinese traders who visited these islands in search of *bêche de mer* and edible birds' nests.

To this belief may in all probability be also attributed the fact that these islands were avoided by most voyagers, and hence no records exist with reference to their history prior to the close of the last century, when the Honourable East India Company, recognising the advantages which the group afforded for a penal colony, sent down Lieutenant Blair (who had previously been commissioned to survey and report upon the islands) in charge of a small expedition and with instructions to provide for the reception of prisoners.

A Settlement was accordingly formed at Port Blair, then known as Port Cornwallis, where Blair displayed much energy and skill in his arrangements. After a brief residence of three years, during which the colony enjoyed excellent health, and Blair was able to report favourably of his relations with the aborigines,² orders were received from Calcutta for the removal of the entire establishment to the magnificent harbour in North Andaman, where it was proposed to form a Naval Arsenal. The transfer was effected in 1792, and the newly occupied station was named Port Cornwallis, while the recently abandoned Port was styled "Old Harbour," by which name it continued to be known till 1858, when, at Dr. Mouat's suggestion, it was appropriately changed to Port Blair. The new site selected for occupation, despite its apparent natural advantages, proved most unhealthy, and a year had hardly elapsed before it became evident that the change from South Andaman had been ill-advised; it was not, however, till February, 1796, that, in consequence of the continued sickness and high death rate, Government finally decided upon the abandonment of the colony, and the removal of the prisoners (numbering 270) to Penang, while the free settlers and troops were conveyed back to Bengal.

From this date the islands remained unoccupied by aliens for

¹ *Vide* Mouat, p. 22, and "Journ Anthropol. Inst.," vol. xii, No. 42, p. 339.

² Both his account and that of Lieutenant R. H. Colebrooke, who visited the islands about the same time (if not actually in each other's company), were published, the latter appearing in vol. iv. of the "Asiatic Researches." Although the accounts furnished by them do not in all respects accord with our present knowledge of the habits of these savages, it must be borne in mind that, apart from the difficulties which attend inquiries prosecuted as were theirs, with but little or no acquaintance with the language spoken by the savages, various changes or modifications have probably occurred during the long lapse of years which may account for many seeming discrepancies.

sixty-two years, during which period all that is known regarding them or their inhabitants was derived from accounts published of casual visits paid by Government or trading vessels;¹ but as these add little to our information it is unnecessary to particularise them further than to say that they confirm the reports furnished by Colebrooke of the degraded condition of the savages and their inveterate hostility towards all strangers.

The modern history of the Andamans may be said to date from the latter end of 1857, when the scheme of founding a penal settlement and harbour of refuge in these islands, which had been under consideration for a few years, was precipitated by the events connected with the Sepoy mutiny. A Commission, composed of Dr. F. J. Mouat as President, and Dr. G. Playfair, A.M.S., and Lieutenant J. A. Heathcote, of the Indian Navy, as members, was despatched at this time with instructions to explore the coasts of these islands, to examine how far they were adapted for the establishment of a convict station, and to select a suitable site for such a Settlement.

Leaving Calcutta on the 23rd November, and travelling *via* Moulmein, Dr. Mouat and his colleagues reached Port Cornwallis on the 11th December; they thence visited in succession Stewart's Sound, Long Island, Barren Island, Old Harbour, McPherson's Strait, Cinque Islands, Labyrinth Islands, Port Mouat, Port Campbell, Middle Strait, and finally Port Andaman, making careful observations at each of these localities, in the course of which many adventures with the aborigines occurred, the only untoward one being at the last stage of the expedition and on the last day of the old year, when an encounter provoked by the savages took place which resulted in a few of them being killed and wounded and one being taken captive.² The Commission returned to Calcutta early in the new year (1858), and at once submitted their report; they advocated the selection of Old Harbour as being admirably suited for the purposes of a penal Settlement, and suggested that the name of this harbour might be appropriately changed to "Port Blair," in honour of the distinguished hydrographer.

In recognition of the excellent services performed by the Commission the special thanks of the Supreme Government were

¹ The three chief incidents recorded and mentioned by Mouat are—1. The rendezvous at Port Cornwallis in 1824 of the fleet conveying the troops for the first Burmese war; 2. The visit and treacherous murder in 1839 of Dr. Helfer, a savant engaged in scientific researches; and 3. The extraordinary shipwreck in 1844 at Havelock Island of the troopships "Briton" and "Runnymede."

² This lad was taken to Calcutta, where he naturally excited great interest and curiosity. After a short detention he was conveyed back to the very spot which had witnessed his capture, but, owing to the kindness with which he had been treated, he appeared loth to part with his captors.

conferred upon Dr. Mouat and his colleagues for the judicious, prompt, and effectual manner in which they had carried out their instructions, and the business-like and practical shape in which they had embodied their investigations.

The Government lost no time in acting upon the recommendation of the Commission, and orders were at once sent to Captain (now General) H. Man, then on duty at Moulmein, to proceed to Port Blair and hoist the British Flag and take possession of the Andaman Islands in the name of the Honourable East India Company; before his return Captain Man was also to make arrangements for the immediate reception of a large party of convict mutineers whom it had been decided to transport thither without delay.

These instructions were duly carried into effect: the flag was hoisted on the 22nd January, and sixteen days later the first party of prisoners, numbering 200, arrived in charge of Dr. J. P. Walker, who had been appointed Superintendent of the new Settlement. During the first decade of the colony (1858–1867) the rate of mortality among the settlers was excessive, the annual average amounting to no less than 18·56 per cent., while in one year (1859) it will be seen from the annexed table to have reached the terrible figure of 63 per cent.

Year.	Death rate per cent.	Year.	Death rate per cent.
1858–59	16·00	1871–72	1·72
1859–60	63·00	1872–73	1·64
1860–61	13·40	1873–74	1·51
1861–62	14·25	1874–75	2·51
1862–63	15·53	1875–76	3·67
1863–64	21·55	1876–77	4·17
1864–65	14·64	1877–78	4·90
1865–66	6·57	1878–79	6·73
1866–67	10·56	1879–80	4·63
1867–68	10·16	1880–81	5·12
1868–69	3·9	1881–82	4·85
1869–70	2·0	1882–83	3·3
1870–71	1·2		

This extraordinary fatality was of course chiefly due to circumstances incidental to the establishment of a penal Settlement in an isolated tropical region peopled by hostile savages and covered by dense jungle largely fringed with mangrove, and rendered extremely malarious by numerous salt and fresh water swamps which are found throughout the group.

The necessity of clearing and occupying without loss of time

the most commanding localities in the fine harbour of Port Blair, and reclaiming as far as possible the contiguous swamps, naturally led to much sickness, which was aggravated by various other circumstances, of which the following were doubtless the chief:—

1. Transportation of a large number of prisoners unfit either to withstand the climate or to perform the work required of them under the exceptional circumstances in which they were then placed.
2. Want of sufficient nitrogenous food.
3. Absence of a sanatorium for the recovery of invalids.
4. Employment of convict labour on works of every kind throughout the year without respect to the suitability of the season for those involving exposure to malarious influences, as evidenced by the mortality in the rains having about trebled that of the dry months.
5. Difficulties experienced by working parties in consequence of the harassing attacks of the aborigines.

The above facts being at length recognised as calling for stringent measures of reform, active remedial steps were at once taken by the then recently appointed Superintendent,¹ with the remarkable result that the death rate suddenly fell from 10·16 in 1867 to 3·9 in 1868, while an average of 1·6 in the five following years, during which vast clearings of jungle and other important works were accomplished, testified to the vigour and success with which the wise and considerate system which had been inaugurated was carried on.

Prior to the formation of our Settlement in 1858, and for some years after, it is clearly shown, from the early records of our relations with the aborigines, that extreme jealousy and distrust prevailed among adjacent tribesmen, and even among scattered communities of the same tribe; these feelings naturally resulted in restricting intercommunication, and it is therefore not surprising to find that in many cases no knowledge was possessed regarding tribes distant only fifteen or twenty miles.² Of the *.ô-ko-jû-uai-*, *.â-kâ-ked'e-*, *.â-kâ-jâ-ro-*, and *.â-kâ-châriâr-* tribes, those living in South Andaman remained in ignorance till 1877, and it was not till 1879–80 that members of all the eight tribes of Great Andaman (*i.e.*, including the *.â-kâ-bal'awa-* of the Archipelago) were able to meet on friendly terms at the various Homes which had then been established for some years.

¹ Colonel (now General) H. Man.

² In 1875 it was found that the *.bô-jig-ngî-ji-* (or South Andaman tribe) had only then recently discovered that Middle Andaman was not, as they had supposed, occupied entirely by the *.â-kâ bô-jig-yâb-*, but that it was shared by another tribe called *.â-kâ-kôl-*; of the territory further north all they were able to say was that it was occupied by the *.yê-rewa-*, a people they seem to dread equally with the natives of Little Andaman.

From the very commencement of the new Settlement, as has been stated, serious difficulties had to be contended with in consequence of the harassing attacks on our working parties by the aborigines, whose cupidity was excited by the iron tools and other implements which in their eyes presented an appearance of adaptability as weapons of the chase; the Government Gardens they likewise freely robbed, until at length stern repressive measures had to be adopted whereby they were instructed for the first time in the laws of private property. A wholesome dread of our power having been duly instilled, efforts were made by Government with a view to the civilisation of the race and the establishment of a better understanding between ourselves and the original possessors of the soil. Homes were accordingly erected in the vicinity of the harbour, where all who needed might obtain protection, shelter, food, and medicine. This step, which was deemed the best, if not the only means of furthering one of the objects which had prompted the re-establishment of the colony—*i.e.*, of reclaiming the savages from their barbarous custom of murdering all strangers who approached their shores—effected a marked improvement in our relations with the tribes in South Andaman¹ by affording them convincing proof of our friendly intentions towards them, so that now, as Dr. Day has stated, “the convicts are left unmolested, the implements of agriculture are not stolen, the fishing stakes are left undisturbed, the gardens are no longer pillaged, runaway convicts have been recaptured, and shipwrecked sailors assisted.”

It must not, however, be supposed that these beneficial results were immediately obtained, for it could hardly be expected that the aborigines should at once believe in our goodwill towards them, or forget their resentment against the people who had taken possession of their fine harbour and ousted them from many of their favourite haunts; in process of time, however, the kind and judicious treatment they consistently met with, first from Rev. H. F. Corbyn, and during ten subsequent years from Mr. J. N. Homfray, had the desired effect, and they have learned not only to regard us with favour, but also to assist us in a variety of ways.

¹ Recently (July, 1883) four men and two women were forwarded to Calcutta for the purpose of being modelled for the International Exhibition; while there they were quartered for a few weeks in the Zoological Gardens, where they attracted great crowds of Bengalis, who had never before had an opportunity of seeing the people whom they are said to regard as the descendants of the Rakshasas (!) Circumstances proved that their Port Blair training had not been lost on these representatives of their race, for on being asked by their visitors for a souvenir in the shape of a lock of their corkscrew ringlets, they promptly demanded a rupee before granting the favour; and in like manner the pleasure of witnessing an Andaman dance was not to be obtained previous to some *ik-pū-ku*- (money, lit. “slices”) having been bestowed upon the performers!

To Mr. Homfray great credit is due for the zeal and energy he displayed in conciliating the members of the various tribes who visited the Homes: he spared neither time nor his private means in promoting their welfare and gratifying their wants, and so thoroughly identified himself with their concerns and interests as to gain their entire confidence and goodwill; he also acquired a fair colloquial knowledge of the South Andaman language, but abandoned an attempt he made to form a vocabulary. As Mr. Homfray's labours may be fairly said to have paved the way, and rendered easier the task of conducting ethnological and philological researches among the aborigines, it is due to his memory that this slight acknowledgment should be here made of his good services.¹

The Homes have effected good by bringing together members of the various tribes, between whom the way has thus been paved for intermarriages, which were of course formerly of rare occurrence; tribal feuds have also here been amicably arranged, while, through visits paid to Port Blair and other Homes by members of all the Great Andaman tribes, as well as by our visits in the station steamer to the more distant encampments, the knowledge of our power, resources, and kindly intentions has spread throughout their respective territories.

It cannot, however, be contended that our attempts to reclaim the Andamanese from their savage state have produced unmixed beneficial results, for it is found that in proportion as they gain in intelligence and tractability, the more fat and indolent do they become, and having no incentive towards exertion frequently lose in great measure their quondam skill in hunting;—availing themselves of the privileges of free board and quarters, they spend their time for days together in singing, dancing, and feasting; the spirit of independence becomes thus less conspicuous, as they learn to depend upon others for the supply of their daily requirements, instead of being compelled to make such provision for themselves. There can, moreover, be no doubt that the effect of our clearances of jungle has been prejudicial to the health of the aborigines, while the excessive tobacco-smoking² among members of both sexes, which has been unrestricted, has seriously undermined their already enfeebled constitutions. If the evil ended here there would be ground for regret, but a graver cause exists in the deterioration which has taken place in their morals through

¹ Mr. Homfray died suddenly at Port Blair on February 25th, 1883, after twenty years' service in the Settlement.

² It is pitiable to notice the evident disrelish and discomfort endured by one of these savages when first given a pipe of tobacco, yet from sheer determination to share an experience which has such apparent attractions for their compatriots they willingly undergo the misery of nausea for several days till they have habituated themselves to its use.

their unavoidable contact with the alien convict population, the lamentable consequences of which will be found under the head of "Pathology."¹ So widespread is the evil influence that has been exercised, that on no point probably will future writers differ so strongly as on the social and moral virtues of the Andamanese. I wish, therefore, to make it clear to my readers that my remarks and observations on all, and especially on these points, are restricted to those communities who have been found living in their primitive state, and who may therefore be fairly considered as representatives of the race, being unaffected by the virtues or vices of so-called civilisation.

The measure of success which was considered to have attended the establishment of the Homes suggested that further good might be effected by the formation of a school or Orphanage for the education of the younger members of the aboriginal population. Accordingly in 1866 a commencement was made with a few children who had been obtained by Mr. Homfray from their guardians or relatives, and who were now placed under the care of a matron on Ross Island, where the Orphanage was opened. In 1870 two ladies from the Kidderpore Asylum (Calcutta) undertook the charge of the Orphanage, in which there were at that time more than forty children of both sexes. For some months the nature of the instruction given was of course of the simplest, comprising chiefly habits of neatness and cleanliness, the alphabet, and a little needlework and basket-making. It soon became apparent that the children possessed much intelligence and were wonderfully apt with their fingers; they were also very amenable to discipline, and proved therefore in every respect extremely interesting and promising pupils, whose chief fault was found to be the not uncommon one of want of perseverance; nevertheless, during the first year's training the baskets made by the lads and disposed of locally realised Rs. 100, while the girls earned a further sum by their needlework and fancy articles, besides which they made up the clothing for the entire party.

After two or three years' labour in the Orphanage the Kidderpore ladies resigned the charge, and some difficulty was experienced in arranging for the retention of the girls; however some were finally taken by certain residents, who were desirous of training them as servants, while others were speedily married. With regard to the boys the question was less easy of solution, for it was found that those who had been taken in hand at too advanced an age began to pine for a return to their native jungles, and so intense did this desire become, that, in spite of meeting with every discouragement, they were discovered one morning to

¹ *Ide* "Journ. Anthropol. Inst.," vol. xii, No. 40, p. 82.

have settled the matter for themselves by swimming away from the island.

The problem as to how the lads trained in the so-called Orphanage shall be disposed of in some profitable manner has been partially solved by training them to serve as domestic servants; but the question as to their marriage remains yet to be dealt with, for of all the girls originally trained in the Orphanage two only have continued in the Settlement, the other survivors having long since resumed the customs of their jungle homes. To encourage the marriage of the lads in question with girls brought up in the jungle, or even in one of the Homes, would probably result in re-associating, the former with those who—so strong is their general inclination towards a jungle life—would wean them from their civilised ways, thereby rendering abortive the many years' training bestowed upon them, and which has moreover unfitted them for the conditions of a savage home.

It has been ascertained that up to about the age of ten or eleven years these aborigines can hold their own with ordinary children of civilised races in respect to mental culture, but after that period further progress seems arrested. Some remarkable instances might be mentioned of boys and girls¹ who at no more than nine or ten years of age were able to read difficult passages from an Urdu book quite fluently, and explain the meaning of any word in ordinary use; it would appear, however, that, physically speaking, training has a deteriorating effect, for of all the children who have passed through the Orphanage, probably not more than ten are alive at the present time, while of those that have been married, two or three only have become parents, and of their children not one has been reared. In respect to morality, too, it must be confessed that they have suffered from contact with the convict population.

And thus, though the Orphanage, like the Homes, has not accomplished all the good anticipated by its promoters, the kindness and interest taken in their little ones have undoubtedly contributed towards strengthening the friendly relations previously established between the aborigines and ourselves.

Friendly intercourse among the tribes has been of late years further encouraged and extended by visits paid in the station

¹ One of these girls (Ruth) was highly trained by Mrs. Homfray, and is able to speak, read, and write English, as well as to converse glibly in Hindustani. As she has been with us from infancy, it is hardly necessary to say that she is ignorant of her native tongue. Ruth is also an accomplished needlewoman, and is clever at making designs; she wears the European costume, not excepting bonnets and hats. Some idea of the advance she has made on her fellow-countrymen (who are still in the stone age) may be gathered from the above statements, but further proof is found in the fact of her asking for and obtaining a Christmas card album from England, and some lace for the adornment of her dresses!

steamer to the more distant encampments by the officer in charge of the Homes¹ accompanied by males and females of the Southern tribes.² On these occasions dogs, iron, beads, and various other articles highly prized by the aborigines have been deposited in the huts from which the occupants had fled, or presented to such individuals as had courage to approach; stringent measures were at the same time taken to check the almost irresistible propensity of the *bō'jig-ngī'ji-* to appropriate all portable property in the temporarily vacated camping grounds.

In these trips Little Andaman has been also visited, but all our efforts to conciliate the *jār'awa-* (or inhabitants of that island) with their offshoot in South Andaman have hitherto proved fruitless. This may in part be due to the summary punishment³ we have been compelled on two occasions to inflict for cruel murders perpetrated on inoffensive mariners; but it may also be attributable to the exclusiveness and hostility which appear as tribal peculiarities, and which are directed alike against their fellow savages and ourselves, as has been demonstrated by the terror with which they have in recent years inspired the South Andamanese, and in bygone years the Car-Nicobarese,⁴ on whom they were formerly in the habit of making raids for purposes of plunder. For a long time now, however, they have desisted from these predatory expeditions, and have confined themselves⁵ to the islands and localities which are regarded as their territory; but still, cases have occurred from time to time which keep alive the unpleasant conviction that any unfortunates who might be wrecked, or should venture to land on their coasts without sufficient means of self-defence, would be as mercilessly massacred now as at any date in their history.

The various measures already detailed as having been taken in order to benefit the aborigines have convinced all who have come within their influence of our friendly intentions; even the distant communities of Great Andaman are now becoming as

¹ An account of one of these visits will be found in the form of a private letter which was published in "Journ. Anthropol. Inst.," vol. vii.

² Experience has taught us that one of the most effective means of inspiring confidence when endeavouring to make acquaintance with these savages, is to show that we are accompanied by women, as they at once infer that whatever may be our intentions, they are at least not hostile.

³ A further possible cause of the continued disinclination of the *jār'awa-* to accept our advances is believed to be due to one or more runaway convicts, who may have succeeded in settling in their midst, and who in order to lessen their own chances of recapture and punishment, have given unfavourable accounts of us.

⁴ How the *jār'awa-* came to discover the distant low-lying island of Car-Nicobar is not known, but it is probably traceable to some trifling circumstance, such as the accidental drifting of a boat far out to sea.

⁵ Vide "Journ. Anthropol. Inst.," vol. xii, "Tribal Distribution," p. 98, and "Communications," p. 113.

well known and as favourably disposed towards us as are our immediate neighbours the *bō'jig-ngī'ji-*, and we have every reason to believe that crews of vessels shipwrecked on any portion of the Great Andaman coast would not only escape molestation and attack, but would receive such assistance as it might be in the power of these savages to render. That their animosity in past years was not unfounded is attested by the reports of Captain Miller and Père Barbe, both of which will be found quoted at some length in the "Journal of the Anthropological Institute" for 1882-3, p. 339.

On referring to the map of the Andamans in the "Journal" of August, 1882 (Vol. II, p. 69), it will be seen that according to our present knowledge¹ the aboriginal inhabitants are divided into no less than nine tribes,² viz.:

<i>bō'jig-ngī'ji-</i>	..	South Andaman.
<i>bal'awa-</i>	Archipelago.
<i>bō'jig-yāb-</i>	}	.. Middle Andaman.
<i>ō-ko-jū'wai-</i>		
<i>ā'kà-ked'e-</i>		
<i>ā'kà-kōl-</i>		
<i>ā'kà-jāro-</i>	}	.. North Andaman.
<i>ā'kà-chā'riar-</i>		
<i>jār'awa-</i>	Inhabiting Little Andaman and southern portions of Great Andaman. ³

Although the *bō'jig-ngī'ji-* are here shown, and in the following pages are described, as the natives of South Andaman—including Rutland and Labyrinth Island—there is no evidence to prove that they have ever been in undisputed possession of the whole of this territory; indeed, the scattered encampments of *jār'awa-*, which are marked on the map as occupying certain portions within their territory give substance to the belief that before our advent they suffered from the inroads of their marauding neighbours, whose occupancy is proved to be of no recent date by the *jār'awa* kitchen-middens,⁴ evidently of

¹ How erroneous were the views formerly held may be gathered from the following extracts:—"The Andamans . . . do not even exist in a state of tribedom" (Figuier). "They have no tribal distinctions" (Wood). "In Great Andaman there is only one tribe" (Mouat).

² These are the names by which they are designated by the *bō'jig-ngī'ji-*, who, being our immediate neighbours, are the best known of all the tribes.

³ As these communities possess many, if not all, the characteristics of the inhabitants of Little Andaman, and are presumed to have had constant communication with them in past years, they are designated by the *bō'jig-ngī'ji-* by the name of *jār'awa*.

⁴ These are distinguished from those of the *bō'jig-ngī'ji-* with readiness by members of the latter tribe, on account of the presence of the valves of certain molluscs, which they assert were never (according to tradition) considered as articles of diet by their own immediate ancestors.

remote origin, which are found in and near the harbour of Port Blair.

No one who has had the opportunity of seeing the natives of the various islands forming Great Andaman can fail to be struck with the similarity which marks their general appearance,¹ and to be convinced that, however much they may differ in many respects, they must at least claim a common origin. Any reasonable doubt on the subject has been removed by the discovery that although each of the several tribes possesses a distinct dialect, these are traceable to the same source, and are all in the same—*i.e.*, the agglutinative—stage of development; further, it has been ascertained that among all, or at least among the natives of Middle and South Andaman and the Archipelago, a coincidence of legends and customs is to be found, and that though the points of dissimilarity between the inhabitants of Great and Little Andaman are more marked, especially in regard to their weapons and implements, they are by no means such as would justify the belief that the latter are descendants of another branch of the Negrito family.

From what has been already said it will be understood that we are not yet in a position to decide whether one and the same dialect is spoken by all the communities designated as *jār'awa-*, or whether, like the people of North and Middle Andaman, they must be regarded on linguistic grounds as representing two or more tribes.

The dialects of Great Andaman may be grouped into three classes, viz. :—

- I. The *bō'jig-ngī'ji-* and *bal'awa-*.
- II. The *bō'jig-yāb-* and *ā'kà-kól-* and *ō'ko-jūr'wai-*.
- III. The *ā'kà-ked'e-* and the two tribes of North Andaman.

But it must not be supposed that the similarity between the dialect of any of these groups is so great that a knowledge of one would enable a person to converse intelligibly with members of the other tribes in the same classification, for such is not the case; now, however, that intercommunication is less restricted it is not unusual to find that members of the various communities are sufficiently acquainted with the dialect spoken by their immediate neighbours as to hold intercourse with them.

Little which throws light on their past history can be gathered from the Andamanese or from their traditions, but from a study

¹ I have been told by the *bō'jig-ngī'ji-* that they can distinguish a *bal'awa-* from members of the other tribes by his high cheek-bones, and the shape of his skull, which they describe as more dolichocephalic than those of other tribesmen; but as this tribe is now well-nigh extinct, it is impossible to determine the amount of credence which may be placed on this strange statement.

of their kitchen-middens¹ it appears that they must have inhabited these islands, and have remained in much the same state of barbarism for a very considerable period.

On the assumption that the members of these tribes lived entirely on the coast, it was till recently believed that the kitchen-middens were always situated close to the sea-shore, and it was even said that the accident of their being found far inland would "indicate that some terrestrial changes in the islands have taken place." The incorrectness of this theory is beyond all question, as we have now ample evidence that not only on the coast, but also in the depth of the jungle, there are permanent encampments throughout the group, where we are assured many of these refuse heaps are to be found bearing traces which testify to the remoteness of their origin.

A change, however, appears to be gradually taking place in respect to the formation of these kitchen-middens, which is accounted for by the fact, that whereas in the olden days they were able to regard the slowly increasing heap with pride as witnessing to the success and skill in hunting and fishing of the community near whose encampment it was situated, nowadays all cause for boasting regarding their achievements is considered at an end in consequence of the material assistance they receive from the dogs we have given them, and the superiority (*sic*) of the weapons they have been able to manufacture from iron obtained from the Homes.

Various estimates have been hazarded as to the probable strength of the aboriginal population; but as no reliable data are procurable it is impossible to speak with any degree of certainty on the subject. From recent observations and the ascertained ravages of certain epidemics it seems hardly likely that the aggregate population of Great Andaman at the present day exceeds 2,000 souls, while the *jārāwa*, who inhabit Little Andaman and a few localities in Great Andaman, may perchance number from 1,000 to 1,500 more; amongst these communities the effect of our occupation cannot have had, as yet, the prejudicial influence which has unhappily resulted among the tribes of Great Andaman from contact with alien races, the causes of which, being noticed elsewhere, need not here be particularised, especially as they are chiefly such as have been found to follow

¹ Col. (now Gen.) H. Man was the first to open up the kitchen-middens in and near the harbour at Port Blair, and the late M. de Roepstorff subsequently devoted some time to their examination, but it does not appear that he has left any notes as to the result of his investigations; at present all that has been published on this subject is embodied in the late Dr. Stoliczka's paper "Note on the Kjökken-möddings of the Andaman Islands" (*vide* Proc. As. Soc. Bengal, January, 1870).

ever in the wake of civilisation to the extermination of the savage race.

In closing this paper it will not, I think, be devoid of interest, even to the general reader, if I append a few particulars regarding Port Blair as the centre of the great Indian penal Settlement.

A glance at the map will show that Port Blair is situated near the south-eastern extremity of Great Andaman, and consists of a fine harbour somewhat *F*-shaped, which extends over seven miles in a south-westerly direction; it contains three islands, Ross, Chatham, and Viper. The first of these, containing an area of about 80 acres, is situated in a commanding position at the mouth of the harbour, and has been the site of the headquarters of the Settlement since its re-establishment in March, 1858; the number of its residents ranges between 2,000 and 3,000, and includes the majority of the civil and military officers, the European troops, and detachments of native infantry and police; the residue consists chiefly of convicts. The Protestant church, Roman Catholic chapel, and a native Christian chapel are on this island.

The second island, Chatham, contains about 12 acres, and is situated midway between Ross and Viper, being visible to both at the bend of the harbour; its population numbers about 500, and is composed for the most part of hospital patients, convalescents, and convicts, who are employed on the steam saw-mills.

Viper, the third island, is about five miles distant by sea from Ross, from which it is hidden by the intervening hills on the so-called "mainland"; its area is slightly larger than that of Ross, but owing to its configuration is not so well adapted for building purposes; the majority of its inhabitants (usually numbering about 1,600 souls) are hospital patients, convalescents, and chain-gang prisoners, these last being confined in the only jail in the Settlement.

Mount Harriet¹ (about 1,100 feet), regarded as the sanitarium of Port Blair, is situated in a commanding position on the north side of the harbour near Chatham Island, and at the eastern extremity of a range of hills running in a northerly direction; its residents are composed of convalescents and weakly convicts and a party of police; round its base, on the western, eastern, and southern sides, various large clearings have been established, barracks and workshops erected, and cultivation and grazing carried on. Similar and more recent clearings exist between Mount Harriet and Port Mouat, where the narrow isthmus ($1\frac{1}{2}$ miles wide) dividing the two harbours, though so far distant

¹ It was at the foot of this hill on a dark evening in February, 1872, that the late Earl Mayo, then Viceroy of India, was assassinated (when about to return to the flagship) by an Afridi convict.

from headquarters, was opened up two or three years prior to the important head-land situated between Ross and Viper Islands.

On the other side of Port Mouat, in a south-easterly direction further tracts of land have been cleared and placed under cultivation connecting that part of the Settlement with the principal clearings in Port Blair, known as the Southern District, being that portion of the mainland which lies west and south-west of Ross Island, where two-thirds of all the self-supporting prisoners and more than half the entire convict population are located.

The cultivation of paddy, sugar-cane, Indian corn, fruits, and vegetables, affords occupation to a large number (at present about 1,500) of a self-supporting population, and further industries of this nature have been opened up—chiefly by means of Government labour—by establishing plantations of cocoanut, tea, Liberian coffee, cacao, nutmeg, limes, arrowroot, *Musa textilis*, India-rubber (*Ceara* and *Hevea*), tapioca, indigo, and vanilla, all of which promise to repay well the care bestowed upon them. Cotton and tobacco have likewise been tried; the cultivation of the former was discontinued long since, apparently on account of the inability of the plants to survive the dry season without great expenditure of labour for watering; with regard to the latter, as failure was due only to ignorance of the proper method of curing the leaves, renewed experiments are being made.

The aggregate population at the present day amounts to about 15,000 of all races; nearly four-fifths of this number, as will be shortly shown, include the convict element, which is distributed among some thirty scattered stations and a like number of villages throughout the entire cleared area; the penal Settlement is thus shown to extend all round the harbour, and to embrace the land at Port Mouat on the west coast.

Following the course of the main road, which now encircles the harbour, a distance of about forty miles would be traversed from its north-eastern extremity to its southern end opposite Ross Island; the number of roads intersecting the Settlement and connecting its various parts is of course considerable, and the importance of keeping them at all times in thorough repair is fully recognised, as is shown by the amount of labour annually devoted for this purpose. In connection with this subject it may be added that intercommunication between the most important points in the harbour has been greatly facilitated in recent years by the establishment of signalling posts at the principal police stations, so that messages can be semagraphed at any hour of the day or night, a matter of no small advantage in cases of emergency so liable to occur in a penal Settlement.

Although the aggregate of the convict population appears large

and capable of ensuring a vast amount of progress in the development of the resources of the country, allowances must be made for the fact of there being but a handful of free servants and labourers in the colony, which necessitates the employment of prisoners in every department; very large deductions have, therefore, to be made on account of those who are ineligible for other than departmental or routine duty, or who from any other cause are not available for Settlement works. This will be better understood when it is explained that about 1,000 men are employed in the Commissariat, Medical, Marine, and Forest Departments; that the self-supporters and servants number about 3,000; hospital patients, the infirm and aged about 1,200; jail servants (or petty officers) about 720; those engaged in manufacturing clothing, in grinding wheat, and in miscellaneous industries 1,400; while of the remaining 4,000 about one-third are required for fixed establishments at the various stations and for conservancy arrangements, the residue being distributed among a vast number of works in all parts of the Settlement.

As in consequence of the continual drain among the self-supporting population on account of deaths and releases their numbers are but slowly increased by the addition of prisoners promoted from the labouring ranks, it must at the present rate of progress be long ere the desire can be realised of the Settlement producing the amount of its requirements even in the one item of rice, while it is certain that wheat, chenna, potatoes, and various other articles of daily consumption—for the cultivation of which the climate is ill-adapted—will always have to be imported; but as a set-off against these it may not be in vain to hope that the day will come when the surplus produce of our cocoanut, tea, Liberian coffee, cacao, nutmeg, and other plantations, together with our exports of timber, will afford substantial compensation by the sums realised in the Indian and home markets. The present average annual cost to Government of every transported convict is believed to amount to about Rs. 105. In proportion as the measures taken to develop the resources and increase the revenue of the Settlement mature, this heavy charge may be reasonably expected to diminish to a material extent.





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